

Artist's Residencies - An Overview

There are many different kinds of artist's residencies, but basically a residency is a place where an artist can get away from "real life" and concentrate on his or her art for a specified period of time. The artist is usually given a studio space and living space in which to live and work, often sharing space with other artists of different disciplines.

Some common types of residencies:

Fees required -

For this type of residency, you will pay to work and stay at the facility. Often they will bring in a visiting artist (well known artist or writer) that the residents get to interact with. [The Vermont Studio Center](#) is an example of this type of residency. Some will offer scholarships that artists can apply for to help with travel or living expenses, but most artists who are there are paying to stay there.

[The Atlantic Center for the Arts](#) is another example.

No fees required -

This type of residency will let artists stay and work for free, but they are responsible for their own travel and meals. Basically this type of residency gives artists the "gift of time" for them to work. The "no fees required" residency places the artist in a beautiful setting with other artists to interact and focus on their art without having to worry about "everyday" types of things that keep them from doing art.

[The Edward F. Albee Foundation](#) is another example of this type of no-fee residency.

Stipend provided -

This residency gives the artist a free place to stay and work and is also provides a stipend to help defray expenses for travel, etc.

[Artpace](#) in San Antonio is an example of this kind of residency.

Work required -

Some residencies will require you to give back in some way, either through teaching community or children's classes, being available to the public to talk about your work, create work for an exhibition at the end of the residency, or to donate a piece of work. The [national park service](#) offers residencies of this type.

Some AIR programs do not require you to do anything. Artists are completely on their own to create (or not create) anything they like.

Many universities and colleges will employ artists in residence for 1 or 2 years. Many artists will take this type of residency positions directly out of graduate school. Some were offered full time positions as a result and some went on to teach full time at different schools.

"Alternative" residencies -

Most residencies are offered by art centers, art foundations, etc. But there are a few that are less traditional in approach. One example is at the [San Francisco Dump](#) where the art created is expected to be made of recycled material. [The Exploratorium](#), also in San Francisco, offers an artist in residence program that would be great for an artist who is interested in science and working with kids. [Elsewhere Artist Collaborative](#) offers residencies where artists create site-specific work in a former thrift store.

Most AIR Programs request work samples, references, and an essay describing their work plan while in residence, and most are competitive, with panels evaluating applications. The Public Art Board or possibly the Frisco Association for the Arts could oversee the selection and application process.

Retreat Programs

Slightly different from AIR programs, **retreat programs** are not competitive and require no work samples or elaborate applications. These retreats serve artists on a first-come, first-served basis for a fee. These programs tend to last for shorter amounts of time, such as a week or two.

Within all those above categories, you'll find even more differences:

Settings and facilities -

You'll find residencies in cities, rural areas, and even international locations. The facilities will also differ from residency to residency. Some will provide meals, private rooms, etc. while others, especially the ones in the national parks, are more primitive.

Time frame -

Artists can spend as little as a week or two or up to 1 or 2 years at a residency or a retreat program.

Age and career point -

Some residencies are for artists in their early 20's or 30's, some for more "mature" artists, some for "emerging artists" in their first 10 years of their career.

Gender and ethnicity -

Some residencies focus on women and minorities.

Discipline -

Some residencies are only open to visual artists while others encourage artists of many disciplines to apply, including writers, composers, musicians, dancers, singers, chefs etc.

Resources:

Here are some resources and clearinghouses for information on artist's residencies:

[Alliance of Artists Communities](#)

[Resartis](#)

[TransArtists](#)

[Wikipedia](#) has a good explanation and a list of other resources.

Options for Frisco

1. Individual artist

Individual leases the property lives and works. Artist may pay utilities to stay and would be expected to give back to the community either through community engagement or artwork.

2. Lead /anchor artist

One artist has long term lease with city and serves as the primary contact for the city. helps recruit other artists for shorter period of residency. Lead artist may pay utilities to stay and all artists would be expected to give back to the community either through community engagement or artwork.

3. City employee

City employers lives on site with resident artists and serves as contact, landlord and overseas maintenance of property. Artists would be expected to give back to the community either through community engagement or artwork.

Recommendations (For residency Program)

Get an anchor artist to sign a 1 year renewable lease that could include a nominal monthly fee that takes care of the cost of utilities. This artist will help the city promote and recruit other artist from multiple disciplines and will be the city's main contact. Our anchor artist would not necessarily be required to reside at the residency full time so long as they were there often enough to serve as our main source of communication. This artist could use the stables/barn as studio space and could use one of the smaller bedrooms in the Weir home for the evenings when they do stay over.

If the anchor artist studio space is in the barn that would leave more studio space in the home for our short term artists. The living room, dining room and the north east bedroom could be used as studio space giving the artists there own studio space to work in. If the artists in residence is not visual artists i.e., writers, poets, composers they could use their living quarters (the three small bedrooms on the south end of the home) as studio space as well. Three artists at a time could be in residency at the Weir house including the anchor.

The length of the residency program could be negotiated with the artists or could be designated upfront.

This should be a “**work required**” residency where the artists will be expected to give back in some way, either through teaching community or children's classes, opening their studio to the public to talk about their work, create work for an exhibition at the end of the residency, or to donate a piece of work. The shorter the residency/retreat the less will be expected of the artists.

If the anchor artist is committed to a long term lease, (one year renewable) and we had one more resident artist on a 6 month to one year residency we could provide shorter retreat positions to our local and regional artists.

Most AIR programs do not include invitations to families with children. Most artists will want to get away from distractions and the environment may not be safe for children i.e., heavy machinery, paints, etc. Artist could be expected to maintain the property to some extent (watering plants, cleaning etc.) but most maintenance will remain the responsibility of the city.